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UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS: REPORT FOR 1993-1994 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND BUDGET FOR 1995

PART II. ASIA AND OCEANIA

Section 12 - Other Countries in Asia

(submitted by the High Commissioner)

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II.12 OTHER COUNTRIES IN ASIA

1. This section covers UNHCR's activities in India, Japan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Singapore and Sri Lanka.

Area Overview

India

2. UNHCR's primary objective is to promote the participation of the Indian authorities in refugee affairs. Refugees number some 260,000 in India, which includes those not receiving UNHCR assistance. Positive links built over the years with the authorities are being further consolidated by promoting adherence to refugee legislation and relevant international Conventions. In 1995, the formal accreditation of the Office in India, and access to refugees who require assistance, as well as collaboration with law faculties will be vigorously pursued.

3. UNHCR continues to ensure the voluntary nature of the repatriation of Sri Lankan refugees from Tamil Nadu, and to develop its partnership with non-government organizations (NGOs). At the end of 1993 there were some 74,000 Sri Lankans in India, and UNHCR's operation with regard to their repatriation is described in the Overview of Regional Developments (A/AC.96/825/Part II/1). Some 40,000 Sri Lankan Tamils are understood to be living outside camps. Chakma refugees from Bangladesh numbered 56,000 at the end of 1993. The Office will seek to ensure that their repatriation is voluntary, and that they receive protection. The Government is already catering for their material needs, and has not sought UNHCR's assistance with regard to this group.

4. The main assistance activity in 1995, as in 1994, will focus on urban refugees who at the end of 1993, numbered some 25,000 Afghans and almost 1,000 persons of other nationalities, mainly from Somalia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Myanmar. The Government does not accord them refugee status, but recognizes that they are of concern to the Office. They will continue to receive assistance to regularize their stay in the country, and as far as possible to achieve a degree of economic independence. The most feasible durable solution for all these refugees remains voluntary repatriation and, for those with close family links, resettlement to third countries. However, both these options are expected to remain of limited impact in the months to come, and, in 1995, UNHCR will continue to provide lump-sum grants, subsistence allowances, medical and educational assistance and vocational training according to needs assessed by the Office.

5. An increase of the Afghan refugee population from 11,000 to 25,000 persons in 1993, and the much reduced possibilities for repatriation and resettlement, led to a significant increase in subsistence payments. The Office conducted a survey of the older Afghan population to identify those who could manage on their own or would benefit from a lump-sum grant equivalent to 12 months' allowance. The policy on medical assistance was revised to restrict help to the seriously and chronically ill.

6. In the third quarter of the year, the programme was revised to take account of these changes and to introduce the lump sum grant option. Between September and December 1993, a total of 596 refugee families, representing 2,149 persons, received the grant. At the same time, there was an increase in the pace of repatriation to Afghanistan, and 748 refugees returned voluntarily, with UNHCR assistance.

7. In 1994, UNHCR plans to offer lump-sum grants to 1,045 Afghan families (5,000 persons), while continuing monthly allowances to vulnerable cases and focusing on vocational training that will eventually enable more refugees to achieve self-reliance. Medical and educational assistance will continue in 1994 and 1995. It is estimated that, in 1995, a similar number of refugee families will opt for the lump-sum grant, with some 9,000 persons continuing to receive monthly subsistence allowances.

8. In 1994 and 1995, considerable attention continues to be focused on ensuring that assistance provides for the needs of refugee women and children. Health education for women is provided on a regular basis by medical social workers, as well as counselling and specialized medical services. Several vocational training programmes have been organised with over 70 per cent women participants, who thereby acquired additional skills with which to supplement the family income. An extensive education assistance programme is provided for all children over the age of three with parental participation actively encouraged. Assistance to handicapped children has been initiated in cooperation with specialized institutions.

Japan

9. Japan hosted a population of refugees and asylum-seekers totalling some 1,000 persons at 31 December 1993. This figure comprised mainly 900 Vietnamese post cut-off-date asylum seekers and 126 determined as refugees and awaiting local settlement. The population is composed of approximately one third children. Most of the Indo-Chinese are unskilled manual labourers from poor rural areas in Viet Nam. As at 31 December 1993, 439 Vietnamese refugees and asylum-seekers benefited from the UNHCR assistance programme. These refugees and asylum-seekers are accommodated in various camps throughout Japan.

10. In 1993, some 638 Vietnamese boat people arrived in Japan, an increase of almost 40 per cent over the 1992 figure. The boat arrivals constituted the largest group in the region, and had mainly departed for Japan on the basis of rumours in Viet Nam that Vietnamese returnees from Japan would receive a much higher repatriation grant than persons returning from other countries.

11. In order to address the problem of new arrivals, a task force composed of legal officers, interpreters and a repatriation officer assembled to undertake refugee status determination. This determination was completed within a short period and, after intensive counselling, 424 out of 638 new arrivals applied for voluntary repatriation to Viet Nam.

12. In accordance with the agreement reached at the Fifth Steering Committee Meeting of the Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA) held in Geneva on 14 February 1994, the Japanese Government is now applying national procedures for the status

determination of Vietnamese boat people who arrived in Japan after 14 February. For the first quarter of 1994, the number of Vietnamese boat arrivals stood at 45 persons.

13. In 1993, 213 Vietnamese repatriated voluntarily to Viet Nam and, during the first quarter of 1994, some 430 persons returned voluntarily to Viet Nam under the auspices of the CPA.

14. Programme priorities for 1994 and 1995 will focus on local settlement of Vietnamese refugees and the promotion of voluntary repatriation of Vietnamese asylum-seekers who have been determined not to be refugees under the framework of the CPA. Efforts will also be made to settle locally all Vietnamese refugees by the end of 1994. It is expected that handicapped refugees currently residing in camps supported by the non-governmental organization Caritas Japan, and whose applications for local settlement have been pending for several years, will be granted local settlement status by the Japanese authorities by the end of 1994 or early 1995. Counselling for voluntary repatriation to rejected asylum-seekers will be intensified.

15. The 439 Vietnamese asylum seekers and refugees assisted under the care and maintenance programme receive a subsistence allowance of Yen 1,350 per day per adult and Yen 750 per child below twelve years of age. In addition, they receive medical care, counselling, interpretation and transport.

16. UNHCR will also undertake promotional activities, such as workshops and training courses, in 1994 and 1995, to enhance public awareness of UNHCR activities. For 1995, the care and maintenance programme will continue for a much reduced caseload of 148 persons.

17. The assistance programme is implemented by the Foundation for the Welfare and Education of Asian People (FWEAP), Caritas Japan, the Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS), Rissho Kosei-Kai, the Japan Legal Aid Association (JLAA), and Japanese International Social Services (JISS). The JLAA provides legal counselling to both Indo-Chinese and non-Indo-Chinese refugees to be settled in Japan. JISS provides social counselling to non-Indo-Chinese asylum seekers pending adjudication of their applications for refugee status determination by the Japanese Government.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

18. The main activity undertaken by UNHCR in the Lao People's Democratic Republic (LPDR) consists of assistance to returnees, mainly from Thailand. In 1993, a total of 4,205 Lao returned voluntarily to the Lao People's Democratic Republic under the auspices of UNHCR: 3,925 from Thailand, 265 from China and 15 from other countries. Since the beginning of the Lao voluntary repatriation programme in 1980, and as of 31 December 1993, a cumulative total of 18,928 Laotians had therefore availed themselves of the voluntary repatriation option, with 16,227 returning from Thailand, 2,609 from China and 92 from elsewhere. This number does not include spontaneous returnees who returned from Thailand without UNHCR involvement. In 1993, seven new rural settlements were created for returnees.

19. At end 1993, there were still 26,694 Lao refugees and rejected asylum-seekers in the camps in Thailand (23,216 Highlanders and 3,478 Lowland Lao) and only a few in China, compared to some 41,000 in Thailand and 2,000 in China at the end of 1992. No new arrivals were registered during 1993 in camps in Thailand.

20. During the first four months of 1994, 1,375 Lao returned to the Lao People's Democratic Republic, of whom 1,061 from Thailand, 308 from China and 6 from elsewhere. At the same time, there were still approximately 2,500 applicants from Thailand who had applied for voluntary repatriation and were awaiting return. An estimated 200 from China were also expected to express interest in returning home.

21. At 30 April 1994, the total number of Lao still expected to repatriate during the next years was estimated at approximately 15,000 from Thailand and 700 from China. Taking into consideration the present rate of return, it is most unlikely that the population targeted for repatriation will have returned by the end of 1995. Indeed, despite considerable progress achieved, various constraints have hampered the speedy return of applicants. On the one hand, the capacity of settlement sites in the Lao People's Democratic Republic has not always been sufficient to accommodate all applicants; on the other, some applicants do not wish to return to sites where space is still available. As far as the backlog of some 2,500 Lao in Thailand awaiting return is concerned, some 2,300 may be absorbed in group settlements in 1994. It is hoped that some 12,500 Lao still in Thailand who have not yet applied for voluntary repatriation, will be encouraged to do so, in response to the promotional and counselling efforts undertaken by UNHCR with the cooperation of the Royal Thai Government, as well as the further streamlining of programme activities in camps which might be conducive to voluntary repatriation. For this group of potential applicants, new sites will have to be identified and developed in potential areas of return.

22. The ethnic composition of the returnee population gradually shifted. In 1993, 64 per cent of those who returned were highlanders (more of whom returned than in all previous years combined), while there were decreasing numbers of lowland Lao.

23. Six tripartite meetings have been held between the Government of the LPDR, the Royal Thai Government (RTG) and UNHCR, the most recent one in July 1993 in Savannakhet, LPDR, at which procedures and a time frame for return are being discussed to ensure the successful and smooth reintegration of returnees. Discussions on the timing of the seventh tripartite meeting, to take place in Thailand, are underway.

24. The Ministry of Social Affairs and War Veterans continues to be the main partner for the implementation of UNHCR's reintegration programmes in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. In addition, three non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are implementing training activities in some group settlements: CONSORTIUM of the United States, Concern of Ireland and Zoa Refugee Care of the Netherlands.

25. The special needs of returnee women and children continue to be addressed through the implementation of various projects in cooperation with the Lao Womens' Union and NGO partners, with a view to promoting income generation activities through training and workshops. In addition, the needs of the particularly vulnerable returnee women are given full attention on return, and special

assistance is extended based on needs assessments carried out by the Social Welfare Department. Participation of women is facilitated by ensuring that training takes place within the settlements to the extent possible. Activities range from developing pre-school to home plot gardening and small livestock projects. The objective is to make women, particularly single women heads of household, less dependent on rice production.

26. In 1994, in addition to the standard assistance provided directly to individuals or through group settlements, UNHCR will also construct a new transit centre in Vientiane with an initial capacity of 150 persons. Some new elements will be introduced in the health sector, such as training of health workers prior to return, public health and sanitation workshops and distribution of medical kits. Five new settlements will be created and some existing settlements will be expanded. At the same time, assistance to returnee settlements will be phased out for all settlement projects commenced before 1993. Approximately 4,000 persons are likely to return in 1994.

27. In 1995, assistance to individual returnees and to group settlements will be ongoing for an estimated number of 6,000 returnees. Emphasis on the special needs of women, and vulnerable women in particular, will continue. The capacity of the new transit centre in Vientiane will be expanded from 150 to 300 persons. Five new settlements will be created and some existing settlements will be expanded.

28. Returnees receive direct assistance upon return: a settlement grant, 18 months' rice ration, transport, care in transit, one kit of agricultural tools and vegetable seeds per family, mosquito nets and carpentry tools. Those returning to group settlements also benefit from UNHCR infrastructure and community facilities in the areas of water, sanitation, shelter, health, preparation of sites, agriculture, small access roads and education.

Myanmar

29. $ 25,000 have been allocated from the Emergency Fund in 1994 as a contribution to the relief efforts carried out by the Government of Myanmar following the devastating effects of a cyclone in 1994.

30. Following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Government of the Union of Myanmar and UNHCR on 5 November 1993, preparations were made to facilitate larger scale movements of refugees volunteering to return from Bangladesh to their country of origin, Myanmar. Of the initial population of 250,000 refugees in Bangladesh, some 54,000 persons had returned since September 1992 under a bilateral arrangement between Bangladesh and Myanmar. It is planned that 80,000 refugees will return under UNHCR auspices in 1994. The remaining caseload will return by the end of 1995.

Papua New Guinea

31. As of 31 December 1993, Papua New Guinea hosted a refugee population of some 7,665 persons from Irian Jaya, of whom 3,666 were living in East Awin rural settlement near Kiunga in Western Province. The remaining, some 4,000 persons, were living in five villages in the border areas. There were also five Angolan refugees residing in Port Moresby who were being assisted by UNHCR. Approximately

47 per cent of the population is composed of women, while 32 per cent are children below the age of 18.

32. A group of 142 persons crossed the border into Papua New Guinea in 1993, all of whom were relocated from the border area to a settlement site in East Awin where they were provided with food and medical care and accommodated in temporary shelters by UNHCR.

33. Due to a severe drought, which also affected the settlement site in East Awin, and a protracted land dispute with landowners which resulted in not being able to acquire more land for refugees, the planned relocation of 1,500 refugees from the border villages to the settlement in East Awin did not take place in 1993. This relocation is expected to take place by the end of 1994.

34. The main programme objectives for both 1994 and 1995 are to promote self-sufficiency among the refugee population in East Awin, and also to advocate the implementation of national legislation relating to the rights of refugees. Programme activities promoting self-sufficiency, such as crop production and income generation, will be carried out in 1994 and 1995. The introduction of national refugee legislation would help in facilitating the reintegration of the refugees, who at present are confined to the settlement site in East Awin, where employment possibilities are almost totally absent.

35. Further efforts will be made to step up the process of voluntary repatriation. A total of 203 persons were repatriated voluntarily to Irian Jaya in 1993, and some 300 persons are expected to be repatriated in 1994. UNHCR will cover the costs of transportation, and small repatriation grants will be provided to returnees. Some 300 persons are also expected to be repatriated voluntarily in 1995. UNHCR has no presence in the areas of return and the monitoring of the safe return of returnees is carried out by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) which has a full time presence in Irian Jaya.

36. The Department of Village Services and Provincial Affairs is responsible for the administration of the local settlement site and border villages, and for new arrivals. The Montfort Catholic Mission is responsible for primary education and basic health care in East Awin. It also organizes adult education and skills training for refugee women in the settlement site. The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) implements a small post-secondary education programme in Port Moresby. The Baptist Union implements a small business development project in the settlement site.

37. Based on a survey conducted in 1992, which assessed the food of the population in the settlement, a full food ration was provided to new arrivals only. However due to the severe drought in 1993, some 260 refugees whose agricultural plots were badly affected also received food assistance.

38. Some 1,600 refugee children and young adults will benefit from educational assistance in 1994, and the same level of assistance will be maintained in 1995. UNHCR will continue its efforts to encourage the Government to take over educational activities in 1995. Assistance in the health sector is also supported

by UNHCR. The Government is providing basic medical supplies. An amount of $ 550,000 has been budgeted for the local settlement programme in 1994. The same level will be maintained in 1995.

39. The Education Account appropriations for 1993/1994 cover full scholarship assistance for eight refugees. For 1995 it will cover the costs of teacher training for 45 trainees. The trainees will complete their study by the end of 1995.

Singapore

40. At 31 December 1993, Singapore hosted a caseload of 95 Vietnamese persons, most of whom were rejected asylum-seekers who came to Singapore in 1991. There were seven newly born Vietnamese children in 1993 and two Vietnamese refugees who had arrived before the cut-off date and had failed to obtain resettlement.

41. There were no new arrivals of Vietnamese in Singapore in 1993. Some 40 per cent of the population are women and children and among them, 23 persons are children below 18 years of age. A total of 87 non-Indo-Chinese asylum-seekers approached UNHCR during 1993. Of these, only eight persons were recognized as Mandate refugees. There were 11 additional refugees who had been recognized in the previous years and a total of 19 refugees of diverse nationalities (from Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Somalia) received financial assistance from UNHCR, pending resettlement.

42. UNHCR continued to provide care and maintenance to Vietnamese asylum-seekers in the Hawkins Road Camp in 1993. The assistance was directly provided by the UNHCR Office in Singapore, with the assistance of camp administration staff recruited by the Catholic Welfare Services (CWS). Care and maintenance assistance was limited to only essential activities which included food allowance, utilities, accommodation and health care. Language and computer classes were organized by volunteers from the expatriate community in Singapore. The camp clinic was closed in 1993 because of the small the caseload, and a local clinic and hospital were used instead.

43. Rejected Vietnamese asylum-seekers are still hoping for resettlement under guarantees given to the Singapore Government by resettlement countries under the rescue-at-sea programme. They still refuse any repatriation initiative. Some of them attended vocational and technical schools at their own expense.

44. The level of care and maintenance in 1994 will be sustained; however expenditures will be increased slightly, due mainly to higher infrastructural maintenance and overhead costs. The same level of assistance is proposed for 1995. The care and maintenance of the Vietnamese in Singapore will be financed entirely by the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indo-Chinese Refugees (CPA). Voluntary Repatriation will remain the main objective of UNHCR's programme and efforts will be made to counsel the Vietnamese in Singapore to return to their country of origin even though they continue to reject the idea of repatriation.

45. UNHCR continued to determine refugee status and assist non-Indo-Chinese asylum-seekers in Singapore. The asylum-seekers who were recognized as refugees will receive financial assistance to cover the costs of accommodation, food, health

and pocket money while awaiting a durable solution. The durable solution for this population is mainly family reunion in third countries. Only a few cases opting for voluntary repatriation are anticipated.

Sri Lanka

46. The Office will continue to assist refugees and asylum-seekers stranded in Sri Lanka through a small care and maintenance project. With the exception of two Bosnian families resettled in June 1994, efforts at resettlement of these refugees, who numbered 19 at the end of 1993 and included three women and five minor children, have met with little success. Expert legal opinion has been sought on Immigration and Naturalization law with a view to finding an in-country solution for these long-stayers on which it is hoped progress can be achieved in 1995. A new component was added in 1993 to the care and maintenance programme with the introduction of primary education and, in 1994, the subsistence allowance has been increased due to inflation. It is also proposed to continue this project in 1995.

Programme Delivery and Administrative Support Costs

(a) Variations in planned activities in 1993

47. In India total expenditure in 1993 was higher than anticipated, with an increase mainly in staff costs, resulting from the creation of two international Repatriation Officer posts and three local General Service posts for the Madras Office, with effect from 1 July 1993. Prior to their creation, these five posts and an additional two local posts were funded under temporary assistance since January 1993. Furthermore, one post of Driver for the Madras Office was also created, effective 1 August 1993. Other variations relate to savings under local travel, with fewer missions having taken place between New Delhi and Madras in the course of 1993. Expenditures under general operating expenses and office supplies and materials were also lower than expected with the purchase of a vehicle for the Madras office in 1993, thereby reducing vehicle rental costs.

48. In Japan in 1993, a new local General Service post was created to respond to the increased needs for Public Information. However, 1993 administrative expenditures under most budget chapters were higher than expected, as a result of an upward revision in salary scales for local General Service staff and an unfavorable rate of exchange for the Dollar against the Japanese Yen. Expenditure under contractual services was higher due to increased activities under Public Information activities, particularly related to printing and distribution of materials. A major factor which contributed to higher expenditures under general operating expenses was that the UNHCR Branch Office temporarily rented an adjoining space in the same building in order to ease discomfort arising from a cramped working environment. Despite lengthy discussion with the parties concerned, the option of moving into the United Nations University (UNU) building to share facilities with other United Nations agencies did not materialize, mainly due to the high initial outlay which would have to be made to be able to fully utilize the space. In order to provide minimal work space for the staff recruited in 1992 and 1993 as a result of increased UNHCR activity, particularly in areas of fund raising

and protection, efforts to move to new office premises continued in 1993. Expenditure under the chapter for furniture and permanent equipment was also higher than expected in order to provide for the purchase of additional furniture and new computer equipment for staff.

49. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic in 1993, staffing remained at the same level as in the previous year. Total expenditure in 1993 was lower than expected under all budget chapters, except under salaries which was higher as a result of an increase in local salary scales. Savings under non-staff costs resulted from reduced local travel on official business. General operating expenses were lower since planned minor alterations to the office premises did not take place in 1993 and expenditure under office supplies and materials was slightly lower than expected.

50. Towards the end of 1993, project personnel expenditure and related costs were incurred in connection with the establishment of a UNHCR Office in Myanmar, for which funds were made available from the General Allocation for Voluntary Repatriation. Expenditures under staff costs were related to locally recruited short term staff under temporary assistance. Minimal expenditures were incurred for local travel, while relatively higher amounts were disbursed under general operating expenses, mainly in connection with the establishment of the Office in Yangon and for the rental costs of a vehicle for office use. Office supplies, computer equipment and office furniture were also purchased.

51. In Papua New Guinea in 1993, the staffing of the UNHCR Branch Office in Port Moresby was composed of one international post and two local support staff. Total expenditure in 1993 was slightly higher than expected particularly under staff costs. General operating expenses were higher than expected in order to respond to the need for strengthening office security, including the installation of an electronic security lock system. Expenditure for office supplies and materials, including vehicle fuel was also slightly higher than expected.

52. The UNHCR Sub-Office in Singapore functioned normally in 1993 with no changes in the level of staffing, except for the discontinuation of the post of Liaison Officer at the National Officer level (NO) as of 1 October 1993. This resulted in lower expenditure under staff costs. Minor savings were realized under all other budget chapters as well, due to an overall reduction of activities in Singapore.

53. In 1993, total expenditure in Sri Lanka was lower than expected. Expenditures under salaries were however higher due to the recruitment of one Field Officer under temporary assistance for a period of four months in 1993, in order to respond to the expansion of the programme with the opening of the Vavuniya and Trincomalee Field Offices in 1992. Expenditures under all other budget chapters were lower than expected, with slightly reduced expenditure under local travel and general operating expenses, and office supplies and materials, including vehicle fuel costs. The lower than expected expenditures under these budget chapters resulted from interruptions of the programme in the north towards the end of the year. Furthermore, the revised budget was able to accommodate a considerable expansion of programme activities earlier in the year through the redeployment of office equipment and vehicles for the offices in Trincomalee and Vavuniya. In

addition, the expansion of UNHCR's presence to the Jaffna peninsula, which was under consideration a year ago and which would have necessitated increases in the administrative support budget, did not take place.

(b) **1994 planned implementation**

54. In India the total of the revised 1994 requirements is higher than the initial estimate, as a result of the additional staff approved in 1994, the extension of two posts of Programme Officer at the National Officer level and Clerk/Typist respectively until 31 December 1994 and the extension of the post of Associate Protection Officer (JPO) until 30 September 1995. Furthermore, additional provision has been made in the travel budget to cover higher airfares and DSA rates. General operating expenses have also increased with respect to the running of the Madras Office. Provision has been made under the revised budget for a partial replacement of the now unreliable computer equipment used by the New Delhi Office since 1988 for tracking registration and assistance information relating to the large urban refugee population at various locations in the capital. Combined with the need to purchase additional office furniture and equipment for the Madras Office, this constitutes an increase in the revised budget for 1994.

55. In Japan the staffing for 1994 is to remain at the same level as for the previous year. However, total revised requirements have increased, particularly under staff costs as a result of the revision in local salary scales in 1993. Having searched for suitable office space for some time, the UNHCR Branch Office moved in February 1994 into new premises on the 22nd floor of the same building, which had been vacated by UNIC, UNDP, and UNICEF. General operating expenses have increased. Needs under office supplies and materials are also higher as a result of increased Public Information activities, while needs for furniture in the new office premises have been reduced.

56. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic the 1994 revised budget for administrative requirements is slightly lower than the initial estimate, although staff costs are higher due to the increase in local salary scales in 1993. The downward revision also takes into account the discontinuation of the post of Associate Repatriation Officer (JPO) as of 1 January 1994. Costs under local travel have reduced with fewer in-country missions taking place in the year. General operating expenses have been reduced since the revised estimates for carrying out minor alterations to the office premises are lower and, based on 1993 expenditure, communication costs have also been reduced. Under office supplies and materials, costs for photocopying paper and data processing forms are expected to be lower. Costs are also lower under the chapter for acquisition of furniture and equipment, as previously planned purchase of data processing equipment will not be required in 1994.

57. Following the signing in November 1993 of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of the Union of Myanmar, and the conclusion of a technical assessment mission in September 1993, a UNHCR Liaison Office was formally established in Yangon on 1 February 1994. The following posts were created in November 1993, to become effective as of 1 January 1994: Head of Liaison Office, Senior Programme Officer, Senior Repatriation Officer (Protection), and Senior Administrative/Finance Officer. Two National Officer posts of Programme Assistant and Interpreter/Translator were also created, together with 15 local General

Service posts. For the main field location in Maungdaw, the receiving point for the majority of return movements, the following international posts were created, also with effect from 1 January 1994: Senior Field Officer (Team Leader), Field Officer, three Associate Field Officers, Associate Field Officer (Junior Professional Officer), a Field Officer at the National Officer level (NO), together with 13 other local General Service posts. For Sittwe, a transit point on the journey to Maungdaw and also a receiving point for returnees, one post of Liaison Officer (NO) and one driver were created. All the above posts were initially established for the period 1 January to 31 December 1994. Following a further review of staffing needs after establishment of the office, the Regional Operations Review in March 1994 agreed to the creation of three local General Service posts in Yangon and the discontinuation of three others. Furthermore, in view of the emerging time-frame for completion of the operation, all time-limited posts were extended to 31 December 1995. In Maungdaw, international staff will be on mission status with their duty station being Yangon. Staff costs constitute a high proportion of the total revised 1994 administrative budget.

58. Travel costs are expected to be substantial in this newly expanding programme due to the need to travel to returnee areas. General operating expenses are also likely to be high due to rental and maintenance of the UNHCR Office, communications and maintenance of office vehicles and equipment. Needs under office supplies and materials are also expected to be high in this first year of full scale activities. Initial vehicle requirements of the offices and of the repatriation operation, computers, air-conditioners and approximately one third of the telecommunications equipment were supplied by means of a large-scale re-deployment of non-expendable property from the Cambodia Repatriation Operation, together with some furniture released after the closure of some camps in Thailand and the reduction in staff of the Bangkok Office. In addition, a vehicle for the Head of the Liaison Office, a staff van and various office furniture and equipment, including computers, generators and some telecommunications equipment have been budgeted for Yangon under the 1994 revised budget.

59. As planned, the Branch Office in Papua New Guinea was reclassified as a Liaison Office as of 1 January 1994. One post of Project Officer (Admin.) has been established with effect from 1 July 1994. Prior to the creation of this post, temporary assistance was authorized to cover the required administrative functions of the Office from 1 January until 30 June 1994. Consequently, the revised 1994 requirements have increased under all budget chapters, particularly under staff costs. Provision has also been made under joint United Nations activities to fund a United Nations Security Officer on a cost-sharing basis.

60. In 1994, the status of the Office in Singapore was formalized to that of a Liaison Office. UNHCR will maintain the Liaison Office in Singapore, reporting to the UNHCR Branch Office in Malaysia. The previous plan to engage a Liaison Officer at the National Officer level was not implemented due to the need to maintain a Liaison Officer at the international level. In terms of staff reductions, the posts of Resettlement Assistant and Secretary were discontinued at 31 December 1993. The 1994 revised budget is slightly higher than the 1994 initial budget to also take account of an increase in salary scales for the local support staff. No other changes in costs are foreseen for general operating expenses, office supplies and materials.

61. In Sri Lanka 1994, the creation of one international post of Programme Officer and one local post of Secretary, both effective 1 January 1994, were created in order to strengthen programming for micro-projects. The accounting section of the Branch Office has been strengthened by the creation of two local General Service posts of Accounts Clerk and Field Assistant, effective 1 June 1994. These creations have led to increased staff costs that have been partially offset by the discontinuation, effective 30 April 1994, of one post of Messenger Clerk in Colombo. Staff travel has been maintained at the initial 1994 level, while general operating expenses have increased due to improved communications links with the Field Offices. Further increases may be necessary in 1994 in order to implement the recommendations for the upgrading of the security arrangements for staff and office premises in Colombo and in each of the Field Offices. Provision for permanent equipment and vehicles have also increased with the addition of seven computers and three vehicles to enable the Field Offices to monitor the implementation of micro-projects.

(c) **1995 programme proposals**

62. In India the overall initial budget for 1995 is marginally lower than the levels of the revised budgets for the two previous years, in anticipation of a stabilization of the Office's role. The creation of one Senior Liaison Officer post at the National Officer level has been approved effective 1 January 1995, to liaise with Indian Government officials and institutions on refugee matters. This will be partly offset by the discontinuation of an Associate Protection Officer (JPO) post as of the end of the third quarter of the year. The time-limited posts in Madras have been extended to the end of 1995, reflecting the revised timeframe for the repatriation operation to Sri Lanka. Estimated needs under the budget chapters for local travel, contractual services, general operating expenses and office supplies and materials are higher, following an anticipated increase in activities in the Madras Office, while needs for purchase of furniture and permanent equipment are much lower.

63. In Japan all time-limited posts have been extended to the end of 1995. The initial 1995 estimate is lower than the revised 1994 requirements under most budget chapters in view of the anticipated completion of the Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA) which is scheduled to be achieved by the end of 1995. This should also lead to an eventual reduction of posts as of 1996.

64. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic the posts of Field Assistant, Secretary and Guard are to be discontinued on 31 December 1994. All other time-limited posts were extended to 31 December 1995. Depending on the development of the voluntary repatriation movement which should be completed by the end of 1995, a further reduction of posts may be possible. The 1995 administrative budget is slightly lower than the 1994 revised budget under most budget chapters and will cover the same range of activities.

65. The total initial 1995 estimate for programme delivery and administrative support costs in Myanmar is lower than the level established for 1994, and corresponds to the planned capacity of the returnee reception and reintegration operation as agreed with the Government. However, given that the number of staff was initially kept to a minimum to facilitate the gradual establishment of an appropriate UNHCR presence in the border region, limited increases in staffing may

need to be considered once the capacity flow of returnees has been attained, in order to ensure that there is adequate staff presence and follow-up in all areas of return. At this juncture, estimated costs under all other budget chapters, particularly general operating expenses and acquisition of furniture, equipment and vehicles are substantially lower than the revised 1994 requirements.

66. In Papua New Guinea a decision was made in April 1994 to close the Liaison Office by the end of 1995. UNHCR will maintain a presence with two international posts and two support staff in Papua New Guinea during 1994, and up to the closure of the Liaison Office in 1995. The initial estimate for administrative expenditure for 1995 is slightly higher than the 1994 revised requirements and reflects budgeting for a complete year for the post created in 1994. Estimated costs for all other budget chapters remain largely at the revised 1994 levels, covering the same range of activities, and including the planning for the closure of the Liaison Office by the end of the year.

67. It is foreseen that some refugees will be resettled from Singapore in 1994 and that there will be no substantial increase in the population in 1995. The proposed level for Programme Delivery and Administrative Support costs for 1995 is thus slightly lower than the revised 1994 requirements, with the same range of administrative activities and the same staffing level being maintained as in 1994.

68. In Sri Lanka in view of the time frame foreseen for the repatriation from India, all current time-limited posts have been extended to the end of 1995. Costs under most budget chapters are expected to be slightly lower in comparison to the revised 1994 levels.

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN OTHER COUNTRIES AND AREAS IN ASIA

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1993	1994			1995	
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1993 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION		SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
GENERAL PROGRAMMES (1)					
–	–	25.0	Myanmar	EMERGENCY FUND	–
				CARE AND MAINTENANCE	
4,209.4	3,064.3	4,372.7	India		4,199.4
2,005.8 a/	1,200.0	988.0	Japan		323.4
39.9	–	–	Korea		–
1.5 b/	–	–	Other countries		–
442.1	218.9	72.9	Singapore		49.9
33.0 c/	28.0	30.7	Sri Lanka		30.9
				VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION	
116.0	91.1	332.2	India		382.0
35.0	21.9	21.9	Papua New Guinea		21.5
1.1 b/	–	–	Singapore		–
2.3 b/	–	–	Sri Lanka		–
14.5	–	–	Myanmar		–
				LOCAL SETTLEMENT	
922.1	885.5	550.0	Papua New Guinea		551.1
0.1 b/	–	–	India		–
				RESETTLEMENT	
43.2 b/	–	–	India		–
324.9 d/	–	–	Japan		–
2.0 b/	–	–	Papua New Guinea		–
68.9 b/	–	–	Sri Lanka		–
100.7 e/	–	–	Singapore		–
529.9	1,844.2	705.0	Other countries		500.0
				PROGRAMME DELIVERY	
–	–	557.5	India	See Annexes I a and II a	470.4
–	–	369.8	Papua New Guinea	See Annexes I a and II a	371.7
–	–	2,173.4	Japan	See Annexes I a and II a	2,101.6
–	–	213.1	Singapore	See Annexes I a and II a	238.7
–	–	114.0	Training	See Annexes I a and II a	114.0
–	–	354.6	Other countries	See Annexes I a and II a	328.6
8,892.4	**7,353.9**	**10,880.8**		**SUB–TOTAL OPERATIONS**	**9,683.2**
				ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT	
121.5	138.2	110.6	India	See Annexes I b and II b	118.9
1,774.1	1,676.1	608.8	Japan	See Annexes I b and II b	581.0
–	–	79.3	Singapore	See Annexes I b and II b	51.4
54.0	202.3	202.0	Training	See Annexes I b and II b	202.0
10,842.0	**9,370.5**	**11,881.5**		**TOTAL (1)**	**10,636.5**

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN OTHER COUNTRIES AND AREAS IN ASIA

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1993	1994			1995	
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1993 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION		SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
			SPECIAL PROGRAMMES (2)		
				EDUCATION ACCOUNT	
30.2	19.2	19.2	Papua New Guinea	20 university scholarships	31.2
				COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION	
709.9	888.2	2,301.2	Japan		754.6
3,229.6	6,107.1	4,145.9	Laos		3,949.1
–	186.5	191.2	Singapore		211.3
–	9,458.5	–	Other countries		–
				PROGRAMME DELIVERY	
–	–	448.4	Japan		434.8
–	–	481.9	Laos		429.1
				ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT	
259.7	–	38.3	Laos		36.7
				OTHER TRUST FUNDS	
4,282.6	5,500.0	5,432.2	Sri Lanka		6,409.7
209.8	–	–	Japan		–
447.0	346.4	–	India		–
140.0	–	7,458.7	Myanmar		13,120.0
0.4	–	–	Papua New Guinea		–
				PROGRAMME DELIVERY	
–	–	362.6	India		336.9
–	–	1,163.5	Sri Lanka		1,102.5
–	–	2,271.6	Myanmar		2,043.0
–	–	126.0	Training		126.0
				ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT	
–	–	132.9	Sri Lanka		116.5
–	–	348.5	Myanmar		252.0
23.0	–	52.0	Sri Lanka		52.0
23.8	–	111.8	Myanmar		111.8
102.2	58.6	66.7	India	Junior Professional Officer	66.7
–	201.6	219.1	Laos	Junior Professional Officer	219.1
9,458.2	**22,766.1**	**25,371.7**		**TOTAL (2)**	**29,803.0**
20,300.2	**32,136.6**	**37,253.2**		**GRAND TOTAL (1+2)**	**40,439.5**

a/ of which US$ 7,050 incurred against Overall Allocation
b/ obligations incurred against Overall Allocations
c/ of which US$ 8,000 incurred against Overall Allocation
d/ of which US$ 814 incurred against Overall Allocation
e/ of which US$ 3,604 incurred against Overall Allocation

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HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Forty-fifth session

UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS: REPORT FOR 1993-1994 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND BUDGET FOR 1995

PART II. ASIA AND OCEANIA

Section 13 - Australia and New Zealand

(submitted by the High Commissioner)

GE.94-03334

II.13 AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Area Overview

Characteristics of the refugee population

1. At the end of 1993, the Australian Government estimated the number of refugees in the country at 32,400 persons. Special humanitarian cases who arrived in 1993 totalled 13,000, including resettled refugees and "Women-at-Risk" (4,000), humanitarian cases (2,650) and those under the Special Assistance Category (6,350). In addition, some 3,650 refugees were accepted for resettlement. There were 2,957 applications for refugee status in the period June 1992 to July 1993, and 425 applications were accepted.

2. In New Zealand, the cumulative refugee population stood at 10,388 persons at the end of 1993, with the majority of these from Cambodia, Viet Nam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Iraq. A total of 416 refugees were accepted for resettlement in 1993, compared with 338 in 1992.

3. In addition to Australia and New Zealand, including the Cook Islands and Niue, the UNHCR Regional Office in Canberra covers ten countries in the South Pacific: the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. These islands have to-date not witnessed any significant influx of asylum seekers.

Major developments (1993 and first quarter 1994)

4. In 1993, new developments in the refugee status determination procedures in Australia had an impact on the legal advice functions of the Regional Office in Canberra. In addition to existing efforts to offer legal advice to several hundred refugee status determination officers for first-instance decisions, increased activities had to be undertaken because of the establishment in Australia of an independent appeals authority, the Refugee Review Tribunal. This development brought UNHCR's direct involvement in the refugee status determination process to an end and gave rise to a new advisory function and refugee law training, especially for the new appeals body. It also necessitated training and public information activities relevant to refugee counsellors, case workers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who are expected to assume a more pro-active role in refugee advocacy in the absence of UNHCR's direct involvement.

5. In response to the increasing demands, the Regional Office in Canberra participated in 18 seminars, round tables and workshops in 1993. Three training sessions were also held for the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs and a further two were conducted for the Refugee Review Tribunal.

6. A total of 152 persons were voluntarily repatriated in 1993 from Australia. Of these, 29 persons were repatriated to Chile, 54 persons to El Salvador and nine persons to South Africa under UNHCR auspices.

7. UNHCR assistance to the Refugee Advice and Casework Service (RACS), which provided counselling services to asylum-seekers and refugees in Australia, was completed in 1993.

8. In New Zealand, the Canberra Regional Office attained full voting membership at the Refugee Status Appeals Authority (RSAA) at the request of the Government. This required the presence of one UNHCR staff member in all review proceedings. In 1993, five training sessions were conducted, and the Regional Office actively participated in four seminars and workshops on refugee related subjects with the Refugee Status Section.

9. With the change in the refugee status determination mechanism in Australia as of 1 July 1993, UNHCR's direct involvement in refugees status proceedings also ceased as of that date. As a consequence, the Australian trust fund established in 1991 to support UNHCR legal officers and support staff ceased to exist by the end of 1993. The costs of UNHCR's activities in Australia, New Zealand and in the 12 Pacific islands, for both 1994 and 1995, are covered under General Programmes.

Programme objectives and priorities

10. Asylum seekers who arrive in Australia illegally are held in detention centres. All the needs of refugees and asylum seekers are met by the Government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community groups.

11. UNHCR's main objectives in Australia for both 1994 and 1995 are to promote, uphold and safeguard the Convention and internationally recognized standards of treatment affecting refugees and asylum seekers, and to assist the Government and NGOs in finding permanent solutions to their plight.

12. In New Zealand, UNHCR will continue to function as a full voting member at the RSAA. UNHCR's main objectives for 1994 and 1995 will focus on training activities for officers of the New Zealand Immigration Service, as well as NGOs who play a major role with regard to advocacy, durable solutions, government refugee resettlement quotas and counselling asylum-seekers.

13. The Regional Office in Canberra will continue to be involved in resettlement activities and facilitating or supporting activities for some 350 refugee cases. Australia's annual refugee and humanitarian quota is 13,000, of whom 4,000 are refugees. New Zealand's refugee resettlement quota is 800 per year.

14. In the South Pacific, UNHCR will provide expanded training in refugee law, human rights and humanitarian law, seminars and workshops, involving major legal and enforcement officials and NGOs. Emphasis will be given to the three signatory states, Fiji, Tuvalu and Western Samoa.

Arrangements for implementation/related inputs

15. The UNHCR Regional Office in Canberra works in close cooperation with the relevant departments of the Australian and New Zealand Governments, particularly with the Departments of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs as well as Foreign Affairs and Trade in Australia, and the Department of Labour and the Ministry of External Relations and Trade in New Zealand. UNHCR has observer

status on the RSRC in Australia and is a full voting member on the RSAA in New Zealand.

16. In Australia, voluntary agencies concerned with refugees include AUSTCARE and the Refugee Council of Australia and, in New Zealand, the Refugee and Migrant Service.

General Programmes

17. UNHCR's assistance to the case worker service for individuals wishing to apply for refugee status ended in 1993, as planned.

Special Programmes

18. Provision for staff costs and related expenditures for assistance for the determination of refugee status in Australia continued into 1994.

Programme Delivery and Administrative Support Costs

(a) **Variations in planned activities in 1993**

19. Total expenditure in 1993 was lower than expected, mainly as a result of the non-occupancy of two posts of Legal Officer and Associate Legal Officer. In addition, one post of External Relations Officer at the National Officer level also remained vacant since the establishment of this post in April 1993. Consequently, expenditures under staff costs were substantially lower than expected. Minor savings were realized under the chapter for office supplies and materials. The provision made for the acquisition of permanent equipment was not fully utilized due to reduced needs and lower than expected costs for computer equipment.

(b) **1994 planned implementation**

20. The revised 1994 requirements have been increased in comparison to the initial estimates. The posts of two Legal Officers, Documentation Clerk and Registry Clerk were extended from 1 April to 31 December 1995. The posts of External Relations Officer at the National Officer level (NOC) and Associate Protection Officer (JPO) were also extended to the end of 1995. Furthermore, additional short term staff have been recruited in connection with assistance provided for the determination of refugee status of persons of various nationalities. Consequently, staff costs have increased substantially. Travel on official business under non-staff costs has also been revised upwards, with the planned increase in local and regional travel of Legal Officers and the relatively new Regional Representative in dealing with protection, public information and donor related matters. General operating expenses have been increased as the rental cost of the office premises, which the Regional Office is currently occupying, is expected to increase when the current lease agreement is due for renewal in August 1994. In addition, the warranty on the computer equipment at the Regional Office has expired and it will therefore be necessary to arrange a service contract. Needs under the budget chapter for the acquisition of furniture and equipment are lower than the initial estimates, since much of the computer equipment needs were met in 1993.

(c) **1995 programme proposals**

21. The total initial 1995 estimate is slightly lower than the 1994 revised requirements due to a reduction under overtime and local and regional travel. Needs under other staff costs remain at the revised 1994 levels and relate to the extension of all posts until 31 December 1995. As in previous years provision has been made as in previous years under contractual services for the printing and distribution of Public Information materials. General operating expenses and estimated needs under office supplies and materials remain largely at the revised 1994 levels. A small provision has been made for the purchase of office furniture. No other major changes in activities are foreseen for 1995.

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1993	1994		1995	
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1993 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
GENERAL PROGRAMMES (1)				
7.8	–	–	CARE AND MAINTENANCE	–
134.4 a/	–	–	VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION	–
–	–	683.9	PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Annexes I a and II a	754.8
142.2	0.0	683.9	SUB-TOTAL OPERATIONS	754.8
535.3	591.8	116.2	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Annexes I b and II b	109.0
677.5	**591.8**	**800.1**	**TOTAL (1)**	**863.8**
SPECIAL PROGRAMMES (2)				
329.9	–	–	OTHER TRUST FUNDS Assistance towards determination of legal refugee status	–
–	–	210.4	PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Annexes I a and II a	129.6
43.4	25.3	25.3	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT Junior Professional Officer	25.3
373.3	**25.3**	**235.7**	**TOTAL (2)**	**154.9**
1,050.8	**617.1**	**1,035.8**	**GRAND TOTAL (1+2)**	**1,018.7**

a/ obligation incurred against Overall Allocation